

I'm Duane Mathison, Custer County Commissioner. I also farm along the Tongue River.

I strongly support the Western Alignment of the proposed Tongue River Railroad. I see this amendment as an improvement to the whole project, both from environmental concerns and from rail use concerns.

The remediation improvements should set well with the impacted property owners of the Tongue River Valley, as they only improve upon the existing approved applications.

The timely completion of the proposed Tongue River Railroad and the development of the Otter Creek Coal Tracts can create an economic boom in southeastern Montana that will be felt across the state and throughout our school systems. Coal sales and power generation create many well-paying jobs, provide significant new tax base and should at least stabilize, if not improve upon, our eroding population base. The completion of the Tongue River Railroad opens the door to this potential development bonanza.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment on this action.